

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing multimedia services to digital television receiving apparatus, the method comprising the acts of:

providing to the receiving apparatus advance information related to scheduled broadcast time of scheduled material to be broadcast;

causing the receiving apparatus to connect in advance of the scheduled broadcast time to receive multimedia material related to the scheduled material;

causing the multimedia material to be cached with locks; and
allowing access to the multimedia material in response to a signal from a broadcaster of the scheduled material that unlocks at least one of the locks.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 and further comprising the act of providing an indication during broadcast of the said scheduled material that the multimedia material is available.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the indication is visual.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the scheduled material is a scheduled television program or an advertisement to be broadcast during a scheduled program and the advance information is provided to the receiving apparatus by an electronic program guide facility.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the scheduled material is a television program or an advertisement and the advance information is provided to the receiving apparatus by the broadcaster.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the advance information relates to a pre-determined number of the viewer's favorite programs.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the multimedia material is received via the Internet and in which the availability of multi-media material is indicated by a URL.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, further comprising the act of providing an indication during broadcast of the said scheduled material that the multimedia material is available, wherein said URL is inserted into a broadcast stream to determine when said indication is to be provided to the viewer.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the multimedia material is viewable simultaneously with the broadcast program or advertisement by means of a split screen or screen insert.

Claim 10 (Canceled)

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving apparatus has a set-top-box facility.

12. (Currently Amended) A digital television receiving apparatus comprising:

interface means for connecting to an information resource;
storage means;

wherein the receiving apparatus is configured to receive in advance information related to the scheduled broadcast time of scheduled material to be broadcast and to connect via the interface means to the information resource in advance of the scheduled broadcast time to receive multimedia material from the information resource related to the scheduled material and to cache said multimedia material in the storage means with locks; and

a controller configured to allow access to said multimedia material in response to a signal from a broadcaster of the scheduled material that unlocks at least one of the locks.

13. (Previously Presented) The receiving apparatus of claim

12, further comprising an electronic program guide, wherein the scheduled material is a scheduled television program or an advertisement to be broadcast during a scheduled program and the advance information is provided to the receiving apparatus by the electronic program guide.

14. (Currently Amended) The receiving apparatus of claim 12, further comprising an electronic program guide ~~electronic program guide~~ arranged to store information relating to forthcoming programs, the electronic program guide being further arranged to initiate the receiving apparatus to search one or more information resource for program-related material.

15. (Original) The receiving apparatus of claim 12 wherein the digital television apparatus is in the form of a set-top-box and further includes an output for providing an output signal to an output display means.

16. (Original) The receiving apparatus of claim 12 wherein the information resource is Internet based.

17. (Withdrawn) A method of providing multimedia services comprising the acts of:

receiving advance information related to scheduled material to be broadcast; and

allowing access to said advance information at designated times relative to broadcast of said scheduled material or in response to a signal from a broadcaster of said scheduled material.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, wherein said designated times include a first time for allowing view of a first portion of said advance information before said scheduled material is broadcast, a second time for allowing view of a second portion of said advance information during broadcast of said scheduled material, and a third time for allowing view of a third portion of said advance information after said scheduled material is broadcast.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, further comprising the act of searching a network for additional information related to

the scheduled material to be broadcast using a search criteria formulated based on data included in one at least of an electronic program guide and a user profile.

20. (Withdrawn) An apparatus comprising:

a receiver configured to receive advance information related to scheduled material to be broadcast; and

a processor configured to allow access to said advance information at designated times relative to broadcast of said scheduled material or in response to a signal from a broadcaster of said scheduled material.

21. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said designated times include a first time for allowing view of a first portion of said advance information before said scheduled material is broadcast, a second time for allowing view of a second portion of said advance information during broadcast of said scheduled material, and a third time for allowing view of a third portion of said advance information after said scheduled material is broadcast.

22. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said processor is further configured to search a network for additional information related to the scheduled material to be broadcast using a search criteria formulated based on data included in at least one of an electronic program guide and a user profile.